

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

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State Surgeon General

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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## Discontinuation of Transmission-based Precautions and Disposition of Patients with COVID-19 in Long-term Care Facilities May 11, 2020

This is a summary of guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>

**Symptomatic patients with COVID-19** should remain in Transmission-Based Precautions until **either**:

1. Test-based strategy (Required – unless testing is unavailable)
  - Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
  - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **and**
  - Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens). Of note, there have been reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture.
2. Symptom-based strategy
  - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

**Patients with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms** should remain in Transmission-Based Precautions until **either**:

1. *Test-based strategy* ((Required – unless testing is unavailable)
  - Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens). Note, because of the absence of symptoms, it is not possible to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness. There have been reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture.
2. *Time-based strategy*
  - 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test. Note, because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness, it is possible that the duration of viral shedding could be longer or shorter than 10 days after their first positive test.

Consider consulting with local infectious disease experts when making decisions about discontinuing Transmission-Based Precautions for patients who might remain infectious longer than 10 days (e.g., severely immunocompromised).

### **Discontinuation of empiric Transmission-Based Precautions for patients suspected of having COVID-19:**

The decision to discontinue empiric [Transmission-Based Precautions](#) by excluding the diagnosis of COVID-19 for a suspected COVID-19 patient can be made based upon having negative results from at least one FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA.

- If a higher level of clinical suspicion for COVID-19 exists, consider maintaining Transmission-Based Precautions and performing a second test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA.
- If a patient suspected of having COVID-19 is never tested, the decision to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions can be made based upon using the *symptom-based strategy* described above.

Ultimately, clinical judgement and suspicion of SARS-CoV-2 infection determine whether to continue or discontinue empiric Transmission-Based Precautions.

If the patient had COVID-19 ruled out and have an alternate diagnosis (e.g., tested positive for influenza), criteria for return to work should be based on that diagnosis.

### **Disposition of Patients with COVID-19:**

If discharged to home:

- Isolation should be maintained at home if the patient returns home before discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions. The decision to send the patient home should be made in consultation with the patient's clinical care team and local or state public health departments. It should include considerations of the home's suitability for and patient's ability to adhere to home isolation recommendations. Guidance on [implementing home care of persons who do not require hospitalization](#) and the [discontinuation of home isolation for persons with COVID-19](#) is available.

If discharged to a nursing home or other long-term care facility (e.g., assisted living facility), AND

- Transmission-Based Precautions *are still required*, they should go to a facility with an ability to adhere to infection prevention and control recommendations for the care of COVID-19 patients. Preferably, the patient would be placed in a location designated to care for COVID-19 residents.
- Transmission-Based Precautions *have been discontinued*, but the patient has persistent symptoms from COVID-19 (e.g., persistent cough), they should be placed in a single room, be restricted to their room to the extent possible, and wear a facemask (if tolerated) during care activities until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline.
- Transmission-Based Precautions *have been discontinued* and the patient's symptoms have resolved, they do not require further restrictions, based upon their history of COVID-19.